

The following paragraphs give a brief cronology of this six month evaluation period:

February

Things are beginning to move. OL is negotiating with MSA. Cullinet is aware that TRW is now going to have a second group of users on IDMS at the W1 site and demand a renegotiation of their contract for W1. TRW is completing its site preparation at W1. Training begins in Philadelphia before contract negotiations are complete.

Office of Logistics completes it's contract negotiations with MSA. This was a long and orduous ordeal with papers flying back and forth.

Received the tapes containing Manufacturing, Accounts Payable, and Data Communications Interface software.

The first of two "kickoff" meetings was held with representatives from MSA, OL, OF, and OIT.

The Technical team is staffed, but two will not be onboard until mid March.

March

Began loading tapes at TRW. Took almost two weeks to get Manufacturing and AP loaded. The tapes did not arrive all at the same time. The batch portion of the systems were loaded first.

The Manufacturing and Accounts Payable systems are installed well enough for the functional teams to begin their evaluation. The loading process was much more arduous than expected. Problems between TRW and Cullinet continue.

April

A joint functional and technical team meeting is held to discuss objectives and schedules. Documentation is duplicated and distributed to and W1.

MSA makes terminals available at their Alexandria office for the Purchasing functional team to use.

Software is loaded at W1 for the Purchasing System, Information Expert, and a new version of Data Communication Interface (DCI). Those portions of Manufacturing that interface with Purchasing must be updated also. The impact of this load and the complications of integrating Manufacturing and Purchasing will be felt from now throughout most of the evaluation.

Purchasing will be "unstable" throughout the evaluation. This greatly impacted both functional and technical teams in attempting to do their evaluations. MSA technical people will visit three times trying to get the system "proped up". When a fix is applied in one place, it has impacts in others or brand new ones pop up. Of the problems that arose, the vast majority of them were MSA problems. Most were caused by the fact that these versions of the software were being installed here as one of the first installations. Problems that MSA had earlier solved were not in our installation tapes and had to be done again.

Because we were new to the package environment we had to depend largely on MSA. If they gave instructions that were not "complete", the "other" tasks that we left out had great impacts.

May

The functional team leaders give presentations to the technical teams on how OL and OF function relative to the functionality expected in the packages.

June

The OL and OIT leaders visited MSA in Atlanta to impress upon them the "unstable" environment we were working in and to confirm their commitment to supporting us. MSA technicians would visit twice during the next month to help stabilize. Cullinet's General Ledger is loaded at TRW. A new contractor comes on board to begin looking at the question of integrating Accounts Payable and GL.

An all hands meeting reviewed the findings of each of the teams. Both good and bad news was discussed.

The systems are fairly stable, Purchasing continues to have problems but response time is better. It is only now that members of the technical team are beginning their evaluation tasks. It was impossible to do this earlier because of software problems and applying fixes relayed from MSA technicians.

On the technical side, it was decided that instead of evaluating AP's interface with GL, Purchasing would be done. This was decided because at this point it appeared that an answer could not be reached by the end of the evaluation period. Soon after this decision, the BARS requirement for "integration" was changed to "interface" and the AP ongoing investigation began to bear fruit. Now, instead of ignoring AP and persuing Purchasing, both interfaces will be documented in this evaluation.

July

Technical answers are being discovered. A way to pass data from AP to GL is found and documented. The technique for creating new screens for Manufacturing is being perused. Purchasing can create IE reports. Manufacturing and Purchasing software still have some minor problems, but in order to continue with the technical evaluation they are being handled secondarily. The evaluation questions posed for IDMS are being answered - we can do OLQ and Culprit reporting.

Because JCLBUILD refuses to run, a memo is sent to MSA placing the burdon of its repair on them.

A second all hands meeting is held. A technique, using the comment fields, is discussed for storing the several missing data elements. AP passes data to General Ledger. This was one of the biggest unknowns at the beginning of the evaluation. Rather than having to figure a cost for this to happen, we were able to demonstrate it - at no cost.

Now that we are not doing s/w fixes, have to time to look into things like how

security is setup and how the menus are run.

Two systems people come over to give us the bad news about the number of security leaks we have in the system.

August

MSA finally responds with a fix for JCLBUILD.

The evaluation paper is begun and by mid August have 35 pages. A lot of work remains refining and filling in the many gaps.

MSA promises the required Purchasing fixes by mid-September.

The evaluation paper is complete, but the evaluation continues.